(b) whether Government's attention has been drawn to an article on the subject which was followed by controversy in the press as per the Economic Times dated the 14th and 24th February and 5th March, 1993; and

(c) what is Government's reaction thereto ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE (SHRI BHUVNESH CHATURVEDI): (a) Government is aware of consumer resistance in some countries for the food irradiation technology. Such resistance is not world wide. Food Irradiation Technology is being promoted in this country because of its benefits such as preserving the food items and extending the storage life of perishable agricultural products without any detrimental health consequences. As many as twenty five countries including USA, UK, Canada, having high consumer awareness are practicing food irradiation for selected food items on a commercial basis. Based on our own investigation, we are satisfied that food irradiation is a safe process for preservation of perishable agricultural commodities without any detrimental health effects. International Trade in irradiated food items is rapidly picking up and it is expected that with the harmonization of regulations, and establishment of modalities for exporting irradiated food the volume of trade will increase significantly.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) The Government are convinced about the safety and beneficial effects of food irradiation technology. A few items have already been cleared by the Government for irradiation. For the preservation of perishable agricultural commodities like potato, onions and spices this technology is proposed to be introduced on commercial scale after initial technology demonstration.

Voluntary Retirement Scheme in HFC, Namrup

3869. SHRI BHADRESWAR GOHAIN: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to refer to answer to Unstarred Question 455 given in the Rajya Sabha on 24th February, 1994 and state:

(a) the reasons to ask the employees of Namrup units I & II of Hindustan Fertilizer Corporation to opt for voluntary retirement scheme; and

(b) whether Government will issue a direction to these units not to encourage voluntary retirement scheme ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI EDUARDO FALEIRO): (a) The Voluntary Retirement Scheme (VRS), which aims at the reduction of surplus manpower, has been in operation in all the Units of Hindustan Fertilizer Corporation (HFC), including its Namrup Units I & II, since 1989-90.

(b) No, Sir.

Revision of formulation prices

3870. SHRI RAJNI RANJAN SAHU: Will the MINISTER OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that drug companies are statutorily required to get the formulation prices revised after the bulk drug is procured at lower or higher prices;

(b) if so, whether M/s. Hoechst, M/s. Sandoz, in respect of Tetracycline and M/s. Pifizer in respect of oxytetracycline did not get the formulation prices reduced after procuring these bulk drugs at prices lower than prices allowed in the formulations during the last three years;

(c) what is the quantity procured by each company and the price thereof during the last three years, yearwise, and what was the price allowed to them in the formulations ; and

(d) whether it is a fact that Government companies have been protected by not monitoring the imports ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI EDUARDO FALEIRO): (a) and (b) In accordance with the provisions of DPCO'87, the formulators are required to apply for price revision as and when the price of the price controlled bulk drugs or norms for other cost inputs are revised by the Government. The actual procurement price of bulk drug may however, vary depending on its availability, source and quantum of procurement etc. However, price controlled bulk drug cannot be sold at a price higher than the price fixed by the Government. If sharp variation is noticed necessary steps are taken to revise the price of such price controlled bulk drugs.

(c) Details of procurement by the companies are not monitored. Prices of Tetracycline and Oxytetracycline considered in working out the formulation prices from time to time are as under:

Name of the bulk Drug.	Price/Kg. (Rs.)	Date
(1)	(2)	(3)
TETRACYCLINE :		
(i)	1022.00	9-8-1990
(ii)	1084.00	26-2-1991
(iii)	1095.00	25-9-1991
(iv)	1212.00	21-1-1992
(v)	1294.00	16-6-1992

OXYTETRACYCLINE :		
(i)	750.00	19-10-1990
(ii)	765.00	25-9-1991
(iii)	827.00	21-1-1992
(iv)	1024.00	4-1-1993

(d) No, Sir.

Trade Commission under DPCO

3871. SHRI RAJNI RANJAN SAHU : Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have not specified maximum trade commission under DPCO, 1987 ;

(b) whether it is also a fact that producers are charging high prices for medicines as they have to pay high trade commission;

(c) whether it is a fact that the Ministry has conducted study on Trade Commission; if so, what is the variation in Trade Commission of the total expenditure during 1991-92; and

(d) whether it is a fact that Commission would work out to 50% of the ex-factory cost which is the highest paid by any industry and if so, what steps have been taken to restrict the commission ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI EDUARDO FALEIRO) : (a) and (b) In accordance with the provisions of the Drugs (Prices Control) Order 1987, maximum allowable post manufacturing expenses (MAPE) are specified for all price controlled formulations. No maximum rate for trade commissions is specified, as this forms a Part of MAPE.

(c) and (d) A Committee constituted by the Ministry under the Chairmanship of the Director General, National Council of Applied Economic Research had submitted it Report in March, 1990 regarding the trade margins in pharmaceutical industry. The data studied by the Committee, therefore, pertains to the period before this date.

Import of Antibiotic and Cardiovascular Drugs

3872. SHRI RAJNI RANJAN SAHU : Will the MINISTER OF CHEMICALS & FERTILIZERS be pleased to state :

(a) what are the antibiotic and cardiovascular drugs that are still being imported;

(b) what was their quantity CIF value and landed cost of imports during each of the last three years, yearwise;

(c) whether it is a fact that their import is increasing year after year; if so, the reasons therefor;

(d) whether industrial approvals have been granted for the manufacture of any one of them and if so, the names of the companies, date of industrial approval of each and what is the progress of implementation in each case;

(e) what are the names of the finished medicines falling under the two therapeutic groups which are being imported and what was their quantity and CIF value of imports during the last three years, yearwise; and

(f) what are the drugs which are under price control and what is the price of leader formulation of each drug ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI EDUARDO FALEIRO) : (a) to (f) A large number of drugs are imported for conversion to formulations for domestic use as well as for exports. Such drugs also include some antibiotics and cardiovascular drugs which are not manufactured in the country. The time and efforts involved in the collection of voluminous data relating to their names, quantities, cif values and landed costs of these antibiotics and cardiovascular drugs imported during the last three years as well as details of industrial approvals granted for their manufacture and the progress of the implementation of the industrial approvals and further the drugs under price control with details of the prices of leader formulations for each of these drugs is not likely to be commensurate with the results likely to be achieved.

Shifting of fertilizer units to Gulf Countries

3873. SHRI KRISHAN LAL SHARMA : Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that some fertilizer units functioning in the country have decided to shift their units to Gulf Countries;

(b) if so, what are the names and details of these units;

(c) what will be the effect of this move on country's economy; and

(d) what are the steps being contemplated to offset the loss, if any, as a result of the move ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND